

CHAPTER 6  
NURSING PRACTICE FOR  
REGISTERED NURSES/LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES

**655—6.1(152) Definitions.**

*“Accountability”* means being obligated to answer for one’s acts, including the act of supervision.

*“Advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP)”* means a nurse with current licensure as a registered nurse in Iowa or who is licensed in another state and recognized for licensure in this state pursuant to the nurse licensure compact contained in 2000 Iowa Acts, House File 2105, section 8, and is also registered in Iowa to practice in an advanced role. The ARNP is prepared for an advanced role by virtue of additional knowledge and skills gained through a formal advanced practice education program of nursing in a specialty area approved by the board. In the advanced role, the nurse practices nursing assessment, intervention, and management within the boundaries of the nurse-client relationship. Advanced nursing practice occurs in a variety of settings, within an interdisciplinary health care team, which provide for consultation, collaborative management, or referral. The ARNP may perform selected medically delegated functions when a collaborative practice agreement exists.

*“Basic nursing education”* means a nursing program preparing a person for initial licensure to practice nursing as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.

*“Board”* as used in this chapter means the Iowa board of nursing.

*“Certified clinical nurse specialist”* means an ARNP prepared at the master’s level who possesses evidence of current certification as a clinical specialist in an area of nursing practice by a national professional nursing association as approved by the board.

*“Certified nurse-midwife”* means an ARNP educated in the disciplines of nursing and midwifery who possesses evidence of current certification by a national professional nursing association approved by the board. The certified nurse-midwife is authorized to manage the care of normal newborns and women, antepartally, intrapartally, postpartally or gynecologically.

*“Certified nurse practitioner”* means an ARNP educated in the disciplines of nursing who has advanced knowledge of nursing, physical and psychosocial assessment, appropriate interventions, and management of health care, and who possesses evidence of current certification by a national professional nursing association approved by the board.

*“Certified registered nurse anesthetist”* means an ARNP educated in the disciplines of nursing and anesthesia who possesses evidence of current certification by a national professional nursing association approved by the board.

*“Competence in nursing”* means having the knowledge and the ability to perform, skillfully and proficiently, the functions within the role of the licensed nurse.

*“Minimum standards”* means standards of practice that interpret the legal definition of nursing as well as provide criteria against which violations of the law can be determined.

*“Nursing diagnosis”* means a judgment made by a registered nurse, following a nursing assessment of individuals and groups about actual or potential responses to health problems, which forms the basis for determining effective nursing interventions.

*“Nursing facility”* means an institution as defined in Iowa Code chapter 135C. This definition does not include acute care settings.

*“Nursing process”* means ongoing assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, intervention, and evaluation.

*“Proximate area”* means that the registered nurse analyzes the qualifications of the licensed practical nurse in relationship to nursing needs of the client in determining the appropriate distance within the building and the time necessary to be readily available to the licensed practical nurse.

*“Unlicensed assistive personnel”* is an individual who is trained to function in an assistive role to the registered nurse and licensed practical nurse in the provision of nursing care activities as delegated by the registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.

**655—6.2(152) Minimum standards of nursing practice for registered nurses.**

**6.2(1)** The registered nurse shall recognize and understand the legal implications within the scope of nursing practice. The scope of nursing practice considered to be minimum standards of nursing practice shall not be interpreted to include those practices currently ascribed to the advanced registered nurse practitioner.

**6.2(2)** The registered nurse shall utilize the nursing process in the practice of nursing, consistent with accepted and prevailing practice. The nursing process is ongoing and includes:

- a. Nursing assessments about the health status of an individual or group.
- b. Formulation of a nursing diagnosis based on analysis of the data from the nursing assessment.
- c. Planning of nursing care which includes determining goals and priorities for actions which are based on the nursing diagnosis.
- d. Nursing interventions implementing the plan of care.
- e. Evaluation of the individual's or group's status in relation to established goals and the plan of care.

**6.2(3)** The registered nurse shall conduct nursing practice by respecting the rights of an individual or group.

**6.2(4)** The registered nurse shall conduct nursing practice by respecting the confidentiality of an individual or group, unless obligated to disclose under proper authorization or legal compulsion.

**6.2(5)** The registered nurse shall recognize and understand the legal implications of accountability. Accountability includes but need not be limited to the following:

- a. Performing or supervising those activities and functions which require the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse and seeking assistance when activities and functions are beyond the licensee's scope of preparation.
- b. Assigning and supervising persons performing those activities and functions which do not require the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse.
- c. Using professional judgment in assigning and delegating activities and functions to unlicensed assistive personnel. Activities and functions which are beyond the scope of practice of the licensed practical nurse may not be delegated to unlicensed assistive personnel. For the purposes of this paragraph, “unlicensed assistive personnel” does not include certified emergency medical services personnel authorized under Iowa Code chapter 147A performing nonlifesaving procedures for which those individuals have been certified and which are designated in a written job description, after the patient is observed by a registered nurse.
- d. Supervising, among other things, includes any or all of the following:
  - (1) Direct observation of a function or activity.
  - (2) Assumption of overall responsibility for assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating nursing care.
  - (3) Delegation of nursing tasks while retaining accountability.
  - (4) Determination that nursing care being provided is adequate and delivered appropriately.

*e.* Executing the regimen prescribed by a physician. In executing the medical regimen as prescribed by the physician, the registered nurse shall exercise professional judgment in accordance with minimum standards of nursing practice as defined in these rules. If the medical regimen prescribed by the physician is not carried out, based on the registered nurse's professional judgment, accountability shall include but need not be limited to the following:

(1) Timely notification of the physician who prescribed the medical regimen that the order(s) was not executed and reason(s) for same.

(2) Documentation on the medical record that the physician was notified and reason(s) for not executing the order(s).

*f.* Wearing identification which clearly identifies the nurse as a registered nurse when providing direct patient care unless wearing identification creates a safety or health risk for either the nurse or the patient.

### **655—6.3(152) Minimum standards of practice for licensed practical nurses.**

**6.3(1)** The licensed practical nurse shall recognize and understand the legal implications within the scope of nursing practice. The licensed practical nurse shall perform services in the provision of supportive or restorative care under the supervision of a registered nurse or physician as defined in the Iowa Code.

**6.3(2)** The licensed practical nurse shall participate in the nursing process, consistent with accepted and prevailing practice, by assisting the registered nurse or physician. The licensed practical nurse may assist the registered nurse in monitoring, observing and reporting reactions to therapy.

**6.3(3)** The licensed practical nurse shall not perform any activity requiring the knowledge and skill ascribed to the registered nurse, including:

*a.* The initiation of or assessment related to procedures/therapies requiring the knowledge or skill level ascribed to the registered nurse.

*b.* The initiation of intravenous solutions, intravenous medications and blood components.

*c.* The administration of medicated intravenous solutions, intravenous medications and blood components.

*d.* The initiation or administration of medications requiring the knowledge or skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse.

**6.3(4)** A licensed practical nurse, under the supervision of a registered nurse, may engage in the limited scope of practice of intravenous therapy. In providing the limited scope of therapy, the licensed practical nurse may add intravenous solutions without medications to established peripheral intravenous sites, regulate the rate of nonmedicated intravenous solutions, administer maintenance doses of analgesics via the patient-controlled analgesic pump set at a lock-out interval, and discontinue intravenous therapy. Nursing tasks which may be delegated in a certified end-stage renal dialysis unit by the registered nurse to the licensed practical nurse with documented training include:

*a.* Initiation and discontinuation of the hemodialysis treatment utilizing an established vascular access.

*b.* The administration of local anesthetic prior to cannulation of the vascular access site.

*c.* Administration of prescribed dosages of heparin solution or saline solution utilized in the initiation and discontinuation of hemodialysis.

*d.* The administration via the extracorporeal circuit of the routine intravenous medications erythropoietin, Vitamin D Analog and iron, excluding any iron preparation that requires a test dose in a certified end-stage renal dialysis setting, after the registered nurse has administered the first dose. When the registered nurse delegates the administration of the intravenous medications set out in this paragraph, there must be a written facility policy that defines the practice and written verification of the competency of the licensed practical nurse in accordance with the facility's written policy.

**6.3(5)** The licensed practical nurse may provide nursing care in an acute care setting. When the nursing care provided by the licensed practical nurse in an acute care setting requires the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse, a registered nurse or physician must be present in the proximate area. Acute care settings requiring the knowledge and skill ascribed to the registered nurse include, but are not limited to:

- a.* Units where care of the unstable, critically ill, or critically injured individual is provided.
- b.* General medical-surgical units.
- c.* Emergency departments.
- d.* Operating rooms. (A licensed practical nurse may assist with circulating duties when supervised by a registered nurse circulating in the same room.)
- e.* Postanesthesia recovery units.
- f.* Hemodialysis units.
- g.* Labor and delivery/birthing units.
- h.* Mental health units.

**6.3(6)** The licensed practical nurse may provide nursing care in a non-acute care setting. When the nursing care provided by the licensed practical nurse in a non-acute care setting requires the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the registered nurse, the registered nurse or physician must be present in the proximate area. The non-acute care settings requiring the knowledge and skill level ascribed to the registered nurse include, but are not limited to:

- a.* Community health. (Subrules 6.6(1) and 6.6(4) are exceptions to the “proximate area” requirement.)
- b.* School nursing. (Subrules 6.6(2) and 6.6(3) are exceptions to the “proximate area” requirement.)
- c.* Occupational nursing.
- d.* Correctional facilities.
- e.* Community mental health nursing.

**6.3(7)** The licensed practical nurse shall conduct nursing practice by respecting the rights of an individual or group.

**6.3(8)** The licensed practical nurse shall conduct nursing practice by respecting the confidentiality of an individual or group, unless obligated to disclose under proper authorization or legal compulsion.

**6.3(9)** The licensed practical nurse shall recognize and understand the legal implications of accountability. Accountability includes but need not be limited to the following:

- a.* Performing those activities and functions which require the knowledge and skill level currently ascribed to the licensed practical nurse and seeking assistance when activities and functions are beyond the licensee’s scope of preparation.
- b.* Accepting responsibility for performing assigned and delegated functions and informing the registered nurse when assigned and delegated functions are not executed.
- c.* Executing the medical regimen prescribed by a physician. In executing the medical regimen as prescribed by the physician, the licensed practical nurse shall exercise prudent judgment in accordance with minimum standards of nursing practice as defined in these rules. If the medical regimen prescribed by the physician is not carried out based on the licensed practical nurse’s prudent judgment, accountability shall include but need not be limited to the following:

- (1) Timely notification of the physician who prescribed the medical regimen that said order(s) was not executed and reason(s) for same.

- (2) Documentation on the medical record that the physician was notified and reason(s) for not executing the order(s).

- d.* Wearing identification which clearly identifies the nurse as a licensed practical nurse when providing direct patient care unless wearing identification creates a safety or health risk for either the nurse or the patient.

**655—6.4(152) Additional acts which may be performed by registered nurses.**

**6.4(1)** A registered nurse shall be permitted to practice as a diagnostic radiographer while under the supervision of a licensed practitioner provided that appropriate training standards for use of radiation-emitting equipment are met as outlined in 641—42.1(136C).

**6.4(2)** A registered nurse, licensed pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 152, may staff an authorized ambulance, rescue, or first response service provided the registered nurse can document equivalency through education and additional skills training essential in the delivery of out-of-hospital emergency care. The equivalency shall be accepted when documentation has been reviewed and approved at the local level by the medical director of the ambulance, rescue, or first response service in accordance with the form adopted by the Iowa department of public health bureau of emergency medical services. An exception to this subrule is the registered nurse who accompanies and is responsible for a transfer patient.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 147A.12 and chapters 136C and 152.

**655—6.5(152) Additional acts which may be performed by licensed practical nurses.**

**6.5(1)** A licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to supervise unlicensed assistive personnel under the provisions of Iowa Code section 152.1(4) “b.”

*a.* Supervision, among other things, includes any or all of the following:

- (1) Direct observation of a function or activity.
- (2) Delegation of nursing tasks while retaining accountability.
- (3) Determination that nursing care being provided is adequate and delivered appropriately.

*b.* Supervision shall be in accordance with the following:

(1) A licensed practical nurse working under the supervision of a registered nurse shall be permitted to supervise in an intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded or in a residential health care setting.

(2) A licensed practical nurse working under the supervision of a registered nurse shall be permitted to supervise in a nursing facility.

The licensed practical nurse shall be required to complete a curriculum which has been approved by the board and designed specifically for the supervision role of the licensed practical nurse in a nursing facility. The course must be presented by a board-approved nursing program or an approved provider of continuing education. Documentation of the completion of the curriculum as outlined in this subparagraph shall be maintained by the licensed practical nurse.

(3) A licensed practical nurse shall be entitled to supervise without the educational requirement outlined in subparagraph 6.5(1) “b”(2) if the licensed practical nurse was performing in a supervisory role on or before October 6, 1982. The licensed practical nurse being employed in a supervisory role after the enactment of these rules shall complete the curriculum outlined in subparagraph 6.5(1) “b”(2) within six months of employment.

(4) A licensed practical nurse working under the supervision of a registered nurse may direct the activities of other licensed practical nurses and unlicensed assistive personnel in an acute care setting in giving care to individuals assigned to the licensed practical nurse. The registered nurse must be in the proximate area.

**6.5(2)** A licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to practice as a diagnostic radiographer while under the supervision of a licensed practitioner provided that appropriate training standards for use of radiation-emitting equipment are met as outlined in 641—42.1(136C).

**6.5(3)** A licensed practical nurse who has completed a board-approved intravenous therapy certification course offered by a board-approved provider of continuing education shall be permitted to perform, in addition to the functions set forth in subrule 6.3(4), procedures related to the expanded scope of administration of intravenous therapy in a licensed hospital, licensed skilled nursing facility and a certified end-stage renal dialysis unit. The board-approved course shall incorporate the responsibilities of the nurse when providing intravenous therapy to children, adults and elderly adults. When providing intravenous therapy, the licensed practical nurse shall be under the supervision of the registered nurse. Procedures which may be assumed if delegated by the registered nurse are as follows:

- a. Initiation of a peripheral intravenous line for continuous or intermittent therapy using an intermittent infusion device or a therapy cannula not to exceed three inches in length.
- b. Administration via peripheral lines, after the first dose has been administered by the registered nurse, of premixed electrolyte solutions or premixed vitamin solutions. The solutions must be prepackaged by the manufacturer or premixed and labeled by a registered pharmacist or registered nurse.
- c. Administration via peripheral lines, after the first dose has been administered by the registered nurse, of solutions containing potassium chloride that do not exceed 40 meq per liter and at a rate that does not exceed 10 meq per hour. The solutions must be prepackaged by the manufacturer or premixed and labeled by a registered pharmacist or registered nurse.
- d. Administration via peripheral lines, after the first dose has been administered by the registered nurse, of intravenous antibiotic solutions prepackaged by the manufacturer or premixed and labeled by a registered pharmacist or registered nurse.
- e. Maintenance of the patency of peripheral intravenous lines with heparin irrigation solution or normal saline irrigation solution.

**6.5(4)** Acts which may not be delegated by the registered nurse to the licensed practical nurse are as follows:

- a. Administration of medication by bolus or IV push except maintenance doses of analgesics via a patient-controlled analgesia pump set at a lock-out interval.
- b. Administration of blood and blood products; vasodilators, vasopressors, oxytoxics, chemotherapy, colloid therapy, total parenteral nutrition, anticoagulants, antiarrhythmics, thrombolytics and solutions with a total osmolality of 600 or greater.
- c. Provision of intravenous therapy to a client under the age of 12 or any client weighing less than 80 pounds, with the exception of those activities authorized in the limited scope of practice found in subrule 6.3(4).
- d. Provision of intravenous therapy in any setting except licensed hospitals, licensed skilled nursing facilities and certified end-stage renal dialysis units with the exception of those activities authorized in the limited scope of practice found in subrule 6.3(4).

**6.5(5)** To be eligible for intravenous therapy certification, the licensee shall hold a current unrestricted Iowa license and documentation of 2080 hours of practice as a licensed practical nurse and shall hold a current unrestricted Iowa license or an unrestricted license in another state recognized for licensure in this state pursuant to the nurse licensure compact contained in 2000 Iowa Acts, House File 2105, section 8.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapters 136C and 152, and 2000 Iowa Acts, House File 2105.

## **655—6.6(152) Specific nursing practice for licensed practical nurses.**

**6.6(1)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to provide supportive and restorative care in the home setting under the supervision of a registered nurse, as defined in subrule 6.2(5), or a physician. When the licensed practical nurse provides care under the supervision of the registered nurse, the initial assessment and ongoing application of the nursing process shall be provided by the registered nurse.

**6.6(2)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to provide supportive and restorative care to a specific student in the school setting in accordance with the student's health plan when under the supervision of and as delegated by the registered nurse employed by the school district.

**6.6(3)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to provide supportive and restorative care in a Head Start program under the supervision of a registered nurse, as defined in subrule 6.2(5), or a physician if the licensed practical nurse were in this position prior to July 1, 1985.

**6.6(4)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to provide supportive and restorative care in a camp setting under the supervision of a registered nurse, as defined in subrule 6.2(5), or a physician. When the licensed practical nurse provides care under the supervision of the registered nurse, the initial assessment and ongoing application of the nursing process are performed by the registered nurse. The licensed practical nurse is responsible for requesting registered nurse consultation as needed.

**6.6(5)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to provide supportive and restorative care in a county jail facility or municipal holding facility operating under the authority provided by Iowa Code chapter 356. The supportive and restorative care provided by the licensed practical nurse in such facilities shall be performed under the supervision of a registered nurse, as defined in subrule 6.2(5). The registered nurse shall perform the initial assessment and ongoing application of the nursing process. The registered nurse shall be available 24 hours per day by teleconferencing equipment, and the time necessary to be readily available on site to the licensed practical nurse shall be no greater than ten minutes. This exception to the proximate area requirement is limited to a county jail facility or municipal holding facility operating under the authority of Iowa Code chapter 356 and shall not apply in any other correctional facility.

**6.6(6)** The licensed practical nurse shall be permitted to conduct height, weight and hemoglobin screening and record responses to health questions asked in a standardized questionnaire under the supervision of a registered nurse in a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinic. A registered nurse employed by or under contract to the WIC agency will assess the competency of the licensed practical nurse to perform these functions and will be available for consultation. The licensed practical nurse is responsible for performing under the scope of practice for licensed practical nurses and requesting registered nurse consultation as needed. This exception to the proximate area requirement is limited to WIC clinics and to the services permitted in this subrule.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 17A.3 and 152.1.

**655—6.7(152) Specific nursing practice for registered nurses.** A registered nurse, while circulating in the operating room, shall provide supervision only to persons in the same operating room.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 152.1.

[Filed 3/11/81, Notice 12/10/80—published 4/1/81, effective 5/6/81\*]

[Filed emergency 12/2/81—published 12/23/81, effective 12/2/81]

[Filed 2/17/82, Notice 12/23/81—published 3/17/82, effective 4/21/82\*\*]

[Filed 6/17/82, Notice 5/12/82—published 7/7/82, effective 8/11/82]

[Filed 8/13/82, Notices 3/17/82, 6/9/82—published 9/1/82, effective 10/6/82]

[Filed emergency 7/29/83—published 8/17/83, effective 7/29/83]

[Filed 10/21/83, Notice 8/17/83—published 11/9/83, effective 12/14/83]

[Filed 7/26/84, Notice 5/23/84—published 8/15/84, effective 7/1/85]†

[Filed 1/22/85, Notice 12/5/84—published 2/13/85, effective 3/20/85]

[Filed without Notice 7/19/85—published 8/14/85, effective 9/18/85]

[Filed 11/27/85, Notice 10/9/85—published 12/18/85, effective 1/22/86]

[Filed 1/30/87, Notice 12/3/86—published 2/25/87, effective 4/1/87]

[Filed emergency 7/29/87—published 8/26/87, effective 7/29/87]

[Filed 4/1/88, Notice 2/24/88—published 4/20/88, effective 5/25/88]

[Filed 9/18/91, Notice 7/24/91—published 10/16/91, effective 11/20/91]

[Filed 12/9/92, Notice 10/14/92—published 1/6/93, effective 2/10/93\*\*\*]

[Filed 3/20/97, Notice 1/1/97—published 4/9/97, effective 5/14/97]

[Filed 9/17/98, Notice 7/15/98—published 10/7/98, effective 11/11/98]

[Filed emergency 6/9/00—published 6/28/00, effective 6/30/00]

[Filed 6/9/00, Notice 4/5/00—published 6/28/00, effective 8/2/00]

[Filed 9/15/00, Notice 6/28/00—published 10/4/00, effective 11/8/00]

[Filed 9/15/00, Notice 7/12/00—published 10/4/00, effective 11/8/00]

[Filed 9/28/01, Notice 6/27/01—published 10/17/01, effective 11/21/01]

[Filed 6/6/03, Notice 4/2/03—published 6/25/03, effective 7/30/03]‡

\*Effective date of 5/6/81 delayed 70 days by the Administrative Rules Review Committee [Published IAB 4/29/81].

Effective date of Chapter 6 delayed by the Administrative Rules Review Committee 45 days after convening of the next General Assembly pursuant to §17A.8(9) [Published IAB 8/5/81].

\*\*Effective date of 4/21/82 delayed 70 days by the Administrative Rules Review Committee [Published IAB 4/28/82]. Delay lifted by committee on June 9, 1982.

†Amendments to 6.3(5), paragraphs “g” and “h,” and 6.6 effective 7/1/85, IAB 8/15/84.

\*\*\*Effective date delayed until adjournment of the 1993 General Assembly by the Administrative Rules Review Committee at its meeting held February 8, 1993; subrule 6.4(2) nullified by 1993 Iowa Acts, HJR 17, effective April 23, 1993.

‡Two or more ARCs